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A Tender and Compassionate CALL TO Prophane SWEARERS.

And Takers of the Holy Name of God in Vain.

By JOSHUA MIDDLETON.

mi. 23. 10. *Because of Swearing the Land Mourneth.* Zachari. 5. 3. *Every one that Sweareth shall be cut off.*

LONDON,

Printed and Sold by J. Sowle, in *White-Hart-Court*, in *Gracious-Street*, 1708.

A Tender and Compassionate

CALL

TO

Profane SWEARERS.

And Takers of the

Holy Name of God in Vain.

BRITISH MUSEUM

JOSHUA HEDDLESTON.

Zachari. 5. 3. Every one that Sweareth shall be cut off.

LONDON,

Printed and Sold by J. Roach, in White-Hart-Court, in Gracious-Street. 1709.

A Tender and Compassionate Call to Prophane Swearers, and takers of the Holy Name of God in vain,

TO all you Prophane Swearers, and who take in vain the Holy Name of God; this is a call to you, to consider, and to remember God your Creator, who gives you Life, Breath and Being, who hath said, *thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him Guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

Which Commandment is so little regarded, or taken notice of, that nothing is more frequent in your Communication, then the breaking it, taking

that Holy and Sacred Name into your Mouths, without any Sence of Fear or Reverence, and calling upon him to Damn and Curse your selves, and one another.

The Consideration of which Impiety and abounding Wickedness, hath many a time sadned my Heart as I have passed along the Streets and Places of Concourse: And therefore in a concern for the Honour of the Great God, and in Compassion to your Immortal Souls, I have been moved to address my self to you on this wise; beseeching you to consider the Danger you are exposing your selves unto, whilst ye persist therein, in Contempt of God and his Law, and of the Command of *Jesus Christ*, who said, *Swear not all, but let your Communication be yea, yea, nay, nay*; and that whatsoever is more than these, cometh of Evil, and also in Contempt and Despite to his Holy and Blessed Spirit in your own Consciences, which at times, I doubt not convinceth you of this Evil, as well as others you may be

Guilty

Guilty of, and makes ſome of you many times confeſs you ought not to do ſo, and will be a Witneſs againſt you if ye repent not; I beſeech you therefore in the Love of God, who willeth not your Deſtruction, but is long ſuffering to you, and giving you time and ſpace of Repentance; I beſeech you in the Bowels of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, who laid down his Life a Ranſom for you, that you would no longer abuſe the long ſuffering of God, (or fruſtrate and make void the Grace and Mercy ſhew'd you in and through him,) by doing deſpite to his Spirit, and grieving it from day to day, by your Curſing, Swearing, and other your ungodly Converſation, Proclaiming your Sins like *Sodom*, without Fear or Reverence either of God or Man, as if you would bid defiance to the Great and Eternal God, or indeed, rather, as if you ſaid in your Hearts, there were no God: But I would hope, concerning many, if not moſt of you, to whoſe hands this may come, that you are not of that *Atheiſtical* Principle, but

will profeſs, to believe that there is one only true God, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things that therein is, and one *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, the Saviour and Redeemer of Mankind: And I hope, you believe according to the Scripture, that there is alſo one Holy and Bleſſed Spirit the Sanctifier.

If it were not ſo, I ſhould think it labour in vain to concern my ſelf with you, but having a better hope concerning you, I am encouraged to this labour of Love towards you, if happily this my tender and compaſſionate Call, might awaken you out of that deep ſtupidity, in which you are paſſing away your moſt precious time: And O! that I could lift up my voice like a Trumpet to you, to make you ſenſible of your Tranſgreſſion, ſo as to beget in you a Godly Sorrow that might work Repentance, that ſo your Sins might be blotted out, when the time of Refreſhment ſhall come from the Preſence of the Lord. O that I could awaken you to a conſideration of your ways, which lead

down to Hell, to Tophet, that is prepared of Old for the Ungodly, where the Worm dyeth not, nor the Fire is ever to be quenched. O ye Labourers and Artificers of all ſorts, amongſt whom, this horrid impiety and wickedneſs abounds, both in Male and Female, in Young and Old; let me reaſon a little with you, ye Fathers and Mothers who have Children, which are given to you, that you ſhould bring them up in the Fear of God, and be good examples to them, whilſt on the contrary, ye are teaching them by your example to Curſe and Swear, and Prophane the Holy Name of God from day to day: How will you anſwer this in the great day of account; will not the Lord ſurely viſit for theſe things, and be avenged on ſuch as caſt his Law behind their Backs: Yea ſurely the day is haſtning, wherein he will eaſe him of his Enemies, and avenge him of his Adverſaries, and render to every one according to their Works, Tribulation and Wrath unto the Evil-doers, and

workers of Iniquity; for this Cauſe is my Cry to you, to turn from your evil ways, for this is my Call unto you for Repentance and Amendment, that you may eſcape the Wrath and Judgment of the Great God, for this Cauſe, O ye my Neighbours am I concern'd for you, that you may not Sell your Heavenly Birth-right for a thing of nought. Let me give you to know, that though many of your States and Conditions in this World, are in a low degree in compariſon of many others; yet you are Born unto, and have equal Right and Capacity to an Everlaſting Inheritance in the World to come, and to a Crown of Imortal Glory in the Kingdom of Heaven. I ſay unto you, O ye poor and of low degree in this World; you have equal Capacity of Poſſeſſing theſe Heavenly Bleſſings, with Kings and Nobles of the Earth. To you is the Goſpel of Eternal Life Preached, as well as to the Rich, the Great and Honourable amongſt Men; will you then with *Eſau* Sell your Spiritual Birth-right, for that which is of no

Profit

Profit, no Advantage? Will ye forfeit your Right in this Purchace, that *Chriſt* by his Death and Sufferings hath made for you? Will ye provoke the Lord to diſinherit you, and forecloſe you from any Right of Claim to an entrance into the Heavenly Poſſeſſions. Oh! by no means be ye Guilty of ſo great folly and madneſs, but whilſt it is called to day, turn to the Lord by Repentance, and let the Fear of God have place in your Minds, and take up a reſolution to mend your ways; and as you are ſincerely reſolved of Reforming, he will give you more of his good Spirit to help your Infirmities; and that which hath been your Reprover for evil doing, will become your Comforter in well doing. O that you were ſenſible of that concern I have for you: O that you would Sympathize and take a part with me in the Travail of Soul, for your Everlaſting Welfare. O that you would Mourn a little with me, who am a Mourner for you, as at this very time, ſo at many others. When I think of you,

and

and the Inſenſability wherein you live, not having God in your Thoughts as you ought to have, though taking his Name into your Mouths Prophanely, from day to day. I ſay for this, I am a Mourner on your behalf, and in my meaſure, bear about me the ſence of the Sufferings of *Chriſt*, who hath born all our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows. O therefore for his ſake, be perſwaded to return to the Lord, and to his Witneſs that he hath placed in your Hearts; and look upon him whom you have pierced, and Mourn over him; let your laughter and jollity be turned into ſeriouſneſs, and a weighty conſideration, of what belongs to your Everlaſting Peace, before it be too late, and the day of Mercy be over: And ſeek the Lord while he is to be found, and call upon him to forgive you your Tranſgreſſions, as you have heretofore called upon him to Curſe you, and to Damn your Neighbour without Senſe or Fear, now call upon him in Fear, and in a ſenſe of his preſence: And as you thus

call

call upon the Lord, he will hear and forgive you, and will make known himself unto you, and Teach you the way in which he would have you to go; and as you are willing to leave and forsake your own ways, and take up the Cross to your own wills and evil inclinations, he will comfort you over all your Toils and hard Labour, that you may endure, and give you that hope, that will stay and anchor your Souls, and make you content in your conditions in this Life, looking over and beyond the transitory and uncertain enjoyments thereof, unto those that are Eternal, and shall never come to an end.

So now having in much Tenderness and Compassion, opened my Heart to you in these few Lines, as it pleased the Lord to dictate to me: I present them to you, as a Token of that true and unfeigned Love I have for you, and desire of your everlasting Welfare; and I am not without hope of their being of service, at least to some of you, in order to reform, and therein I shall greatly re-

rejoyce, however, ſhall commit the iſſue hereof to the Lord, and ſhall recommend you all to him, and to the word of his Grace, to that word that's not afar off from any of you, but as the Servant of the Lord *Moſes* ſaid, *is nigh unto you, even in your Heart and in your Mouth, that you may obey it and do it, that this word may dwell plentifully in you, ſo as to accompany you at all times by night and day, in your labour and reſt, to teach you to deny all Ungodlineſs and Sinful Luſt, and to live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly in this preſent World*; is what I truly deſire, that as the Lord hath given us our Lot together, we may be one another's Joy, and not a Grief one to another; every one in our ſeveral places, wherein he hath ſet us, labouring to approve our ſelves in his ſight, to whom we owe all Honour, Glory and Praiſe, and who only and alone is worthy of it, now and for ever.

FINIS.